

# Virginia School of Polygraph Handbook

Darryl L. DeBow, Director



**Founded 1968**  
**Incorporated 1986**  
**Volume 2**  
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**Approved by: The American Polygraph Association, the Virginia Polygraph Association  
and the American Association of Police Polygraphists**  
**Licensed by the DPOR**

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## **Preface**

Throughout time, humans have searched for the perfect method of determining who is telling the truth and who is not. This occurs in all facets of society, whether during times of war and chaos or while in pursuit of innocence or guilt before tribunals. Approaches in determining the truth have varied from horrific forms of torture, to complex trickery, to the use of drug serums.

As the 19<sup>th</sup> century ended, “polygraph,” meaning “many writings” was slowly developing into the highly regulated profession it is today. Numerous talented individuals, who helped to bring polygraph into the modern technology age of the new millennium, made contributions both large and small. The Virginia School of Polygraph’s curriculum is designed to prepare the serious-minded student to enter into this most fascinating and challenging field of study.

Our course of study will superbly prepare students for graduation and for the daily rigors of the professional life of a Polygraph Examiner. We will prepare you for the satisfaction of resolving a “Whodunit” utilizing the latest in polygraph techniques and technology. We will further train you to determine factors of recidivism among criminal offenders and protect the community at large. Prepare to attend one of the premiere polygraph institutions in the country: The Virginia School of Polygraph.

## **Mission Statement**

To provide students with cutting edge technical knowledge, quality question formulation schemes and practical experience in conducting polygraph examinations. Utilizing proven training techniques individualized tutoring and emphasizing proper interviewing methods will enable our students to build upon their foundation; eventually becoming expert practitioners and future leaders in the polygraph profession.

## **Introduction**

Our Polygraph Examiner training course is a 400-hour classroom-training program. Our comprehensive training consists not only of classroom study, but also observation of experienced examiners conducting selected polygraph examinations, and hands-on experience. Additionally, a field project is required, ensuring proper retention of necessary information and skills. Personalized tutoring by our professional staff is available for students needing specialized attention. This program will sufficiently prepare each graduating student for the comprehensive Virginia State Certification Board Examination.

Class rosters are held to a limit of twenty students at a time for sessions held at the Newport News Police Academy

## **Registration**

As noted above, class size is strictly limited to no more than a 20 students per session. This allows for maximized individual instruction. Acceptance into the school is on a first come-first served basis. Registration information may be obtained by calling (571) 435-1207, or via email at [polygraph1@verizon.net](mailto:polygraph1@verizon.net) Please visit our website at [www.virginiashoolofpolygraph.com](http://www.virginiashoolofpolygraph.com) for additional information.

## Rules and Regulations

### Admission Requirements

Applicants must possess the following mandatory requirements: students intending to practice in the state of Virginia are required to have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university OR an associate's degree with a minimum 3 years of criminal investigative experience OR a minimum 5 years of criminal investigative experience, which meet Virginia state requirements. Students who wish to practice the profession outside the state of Virginia must meet their state requirement. All students are personally responsible to insure they meet the all licensing requirement for the state they intent to seek professional licensure. No applicants will be considered for enrollment that has felony convictions or any crime of moral turpitude or any person who has been discharged from any branch of the military service, federal, city, or state government under any but honorable conditions.

### Tuition

The ten-week course tuition is \$6,000.00, which includes the use of all manuals, textbooks and polygraph supplies. Tuition must be paid in full by the March 1<sup>st</sup> for the spring session and August 15<sup>th</sup> for the fall session unless otherwise approved by the Director. The fall session held in Newport News will be \$6,300.00 tuition due to the addition expenses by instructors.

### Internships

Virginia School of Polygraph does **NOT** guarantee or make any verbal agreements to offer students an internship upon graduation from the basic 10-week polygraph course. **All** internships are made through a separate written contractual agreement between the school and the student, with a separate payment agreement between the student and the school.

### Refund Policy

Student who has a verifiable emergency, verified through a licensed physician, and cannot start, a refund of 50% of the tuition will be given or the full fee will be applied to a subsequent program. In the event an entire program is postponed or cancelled for any reason, any and all advanced money received will be fully refunded or applied to the postponed date. Failure to attend the first week of classes after being accepted and registered will result in the student's forfeiture of the entire tuition, unless, as noted above, there is a verifiable emergency and the student cannot complete the program. The VSP Director will make final determination. In the event a student wishes to withdraw from the program the following refund will be issued to the student:

- 1) Withdraw during the 1<sup>st</sup> week: \$1000.00 refund
- 2) Withdraw during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week: \$500.00 refund
- 3) No refunds will be issued after the 2<sup>nd</sup> week

Refunds will not be given after dismissal for disciplinary reasons. (See grounds for expulsion)  
There is a reduced re-admission fee for withdrawals, as outlined on Page 8, Re-Admission policy.

### Facilities

Classes in Manassas, Virginia, consist of a training room, which is adjacent to three polygraph suites shared with Northern Virginia Pre-Employment and Polygraph Services. (NVPEPS) The suite arrangement is also conducive to use of the polygraph instruments. On-site training ensures students can competently conduct polygraph examinations upon leaving the classroom setting.

Fall sessions will be held at the Newport News Police Community Outreach Center located at 10188 Warwick Blvd. (State Route 60) Newport News, VA, 23606. The rules and regulations of the academy will be explained by staff of the Newport News Police Department the first day of classes. Each student will be held responsible for following

these rules and regulations of the academy while attending classes and of the regulations contained herein.

### **Lodging and Meals**

The school will assist students in finding convenient lodging close to the school or training site and will post these hotels on its main webpage. Virginia School of Polygraph will not make specific recommendations on any particular hotels and lodging and meals are the responsibility of each individual student.

### **Schedule**

The ten-week, 400-hour in-classroom courses are held twice a year, beginning in March and September. On occasion, student schedules will vary and class may start earlier or later and on occasions may run on Saturday in rare occasions. School facilities may be made available to students for hands-on practice before and after classes and by appointment.

### **Class Structure**

Classes are conducted from 9:00 in the morning until 6:00 in the evening on the weekdays. There is a one-hour break for lunch and other breaks, as they are needed. For the convenience and accommodation of instructors or guest lecturers, occasionally Saturday classes may be necessary. If this occurs, the schedule will be adjusted accordingly. There will be homework on a nightly bases and study on the weekends for tests held weekly.

### **Attendance**

Daily attendance is mandatory. Failure to attend class or part of class is unacceptable. Absences from scheduled instruction, regardless of the reason, are documented. Absenteeism and tardiness will not be tolerated. If absences and tardiness begin to affect the student's progress, or the progress of other students, the student may be discharged from the program without a refund. Re-enrollment will be at the discretion of the Director. Students are required to attend five, eight-hour per day, totaling 40 hours per week for ten weeks. Students must attend 384 hours of the 400-hour course to complete and graduate from this training.

Upon re-enrollment, the participant will be considered a probationary student. All class work that was missed will be fully and satisfactorily completed in the student's spare time. If additional tutoring becomes necessary for a re-enrolled student, a fee of \$50 per hour will be assessed.

### **Holidays**

The school calendar has been arranged to allow for most National Holidays off; however, some holidays may fall within the class session. Regrettably, it may be necessary to attend class on some holidays. Staff will make every effort to accommodate holiday time off.

### **Course Instructors**

- 1) Mr. Darryl L. DeBow, Director, Primary instructor on all aspects of the basic and advanced polygraph training:** Mr. DeBow has a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and retired as a Sergeant from the Loudoun Co. Sheriff's Office. Mr. DeBow has a total of 25 years law enforcement experience. He opened his first business, Northern VA Pre-Employment & Polygraph Services in 1996 and purchased his 2<sup>nd</sup> business, Virginia School of Polygraph, in 2003. Mr. DeBow was the Vice President-Private for the Virginia Polygraph Association between 1997 and 2005 and a Polygraph Board Member of the Department of Professional Occupational Regulation. Mr. DeBow has been an Adjunct Faculty Member for Marymount University, Master's Forensic Psychology Program between 2001 and 2008.

- 2) **Mr. Guy Morgan, Instructor of R&I technique and polygraph Skill and Techniques:** Mr. Morgan has a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and retired as a Master Police Officer from the Fairfax Co. Police Department. Mr. Morgan is currently employed as an Internal Affairs Investigator with the Fairfax Co. Fire & Rescue Services.
- 3) **Mr. Eric Pohlner, Legal Instructor:** Mr. Pohlner is a graduate of Mary Washington School of Law and is currently employed by the Newport News Commonwealth Attorney's office as an Assistant Commonwealth Attorney.
- 4) **Dr. Jagwinder Singh, Physiology Instructor:** Dr. Singh received his B.S. degree in Biology from George Mason University in 2001. He received his Pharmacy Diploma from Penn Foster in 2002. Dr. Singh received his MD at Belize Medical College in 2007.
- 5) **Miss. Christine Karl, Psychology Instructor:** Miss. Karl received her Master's degree in Sports Science, Psychology, and Education from the University of Salzburg in 1999. Miss. Karl has a Master's degree in Forensic Psychology from Marymount University,
- 6) **Mr. Christopher Fausett, Instrumentation Instructor, Polygraph Skill and Techniques:** Mr. Fausett received his Associate's degree from ITT Technical School and is a graduate of Argenbright International Institute of Polygraph. For the past 21 years, Mr. Fausett has been heavily involved in the research and implementation of the polygraph, specifically computerized polygraphs.
- 7) **Mr. William Henley, Chart Interpretation Instructor, Polygraph Skill and Techniques:** Mr. Henley graduated from James Madison University with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science in 1975. Between 1974 and 1981 he worked for VA Beach Police Department. Between 1981 and 2007 he worked for NCIS and retired. In 1988 Mr. Henley graduated from DODPI. While with NCIS he was Special; Agent in Charge of Mid-Atlantic polygraphs site and Norfolk, VA between 1990 until his retirement. Hi duties included supervising all polygraph examinations for the East Coast, South America, Caribbean and Europe.

Instructors retained for this school are all highly professional individuals and should be treated as such. Attorneys, physicians, psychiatrists/psychologists and other professionals will be lecturing on a regular basis. All of our instructors and guest lecturers have many years of experience in their respective fields. Please show all instructors the utmost respect, and address them professionally. Instructors may change depending on the necessity of the class and or instructor's availability.

### **Atmosphere**

The classroom environment is relaxed, as we believe that students absorb material faster and retain it longer if pressure is minimized. Instructors welcome questions. Our staff believes that no student should ever leave class with an unanswered question or lack of understanding of any part of the day's instruction.

### **Dress Code**

Classes are held in a relaxed atmosphere. Casual attire is allowed; however, shorts, blue jeans, t-shirts, sandals, revealing, or ill-fitting clothing are not permitted. Each student should bring one business suit with them for class pictures. Business attire may be required several times throughout the training period.

### **Out of Classroom Study**

Out of classroom study is vitally important to fully understanding and completely integrating the material that a student is exposed to daily. Homework and studying will be necessary to process what was learned in class. This is essential. Mandatory studying and class projects are fundamental to remaining competitive and to ensure graduation. Unannounced quizzes, plus comprehensive tests and impromptu graded reviews are an important means of evaluating a student's progress.

### **Student Complaints**

Any student who wishes to file a complaint against another student or staff member of the school is instructed to contact the director of the school. Complaints can come in any form, verbally, written or third party. All complaints, no matter how minor, are considered serious and will be looked into by the school and/or its designee. Virginia School of Polygraph strives to provide a relaxed and professional atmosphere for all students and will do anything within its power to assure this occurs.

### **Career Placement**

Virginia School of Polygraph does not offer job placement services and does not guarantee employment. The school does, however, receive numerous employment notices and these opportunities are provided to interested students.

### **Field Project**

A post-graduation field project must be completed as part of each student's academic instruction upon returning to his or her employer. Part of this project is to further allow us to evaluate the student, ensuring professional, ethical and operational proficiency.

Each student will be required to conduct a set number of examinations in the techniques taught at our school upon returning to their employers. After this field project is completed, evaluated by staff members.

Each student will be required to complete a 15-page research paper on a polygraph topic approved by the director of the Virginia School of polygraph. The research paper must be completed prior to graduation.

If any deficiencies in completing the field project are noted, they will be brought to the students' attention, corrective suggestions will be offered, and the student will be encouraged to finish the project.

### **Grading Structure**

**94-100=A**

**87-93 =B**

**80-86 =C**

All students are required to maintain a minimum average of **80%** during the entire ten-week course. If a student's grade falls below that standard, the Director has the option of allowing the student to remain for one examination in order to bring his/her GPA above **80%** or to dismiss the student for failure to meet the academic requirements of the school. **If students fail to bring their GPAs above 80%, once given this one time opportunity, they will be dismissed for not meeting academic requirements.**

### **Honor Code**

VSP firmly believes that students and future polygraph examiners should be of the highest moral character. To promote a strong sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust and fairness among all students, and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, students are expected to behave in a law-abiding, honest fashion. Cheating, plagiarism, lying and stealing will not be tolerated. Staff will enforce the honor code and students are expected to report violations of the honor code to the Director immediately. Every effort will be made to protect the confidentiality of the source of reported misbehavior. Final determination of expulsion will rest with the Director. (See Grounds for Expulsion.)

### **Grounds for Expulsion**

Any student found violating the ethics of the APA, the rules, regulations and policies of the school, or the confidentiality of any polygraph examination viewed during training, may be expelled permanently.

Other disciplinary infractions that are grounds for expulsion are, but not limited to:

1. Usage of illegal drugs or participation in any other illegal drug activities.
2. Participation in criminal behavior, including misdemeanors and felonies.
3. Public drunkenness or DUI/DWI offenses.
4. Disorderliness.
5. Application dishonesty or failure to make prompt payment for school indebtedness.
6. General dishonesty, such as lying, cheating or stealing, or any other issued of moral turpitude.
7. Any acts which tend to show unfavorable upon the student, VSP, or the profession of polygraph in general.
8. Failure to maintain an 80% GPA during the entire course of instruction
9. Collaboration during testing
10. Plagiarism
11. Buying, selling, stealing, and the use of prior students tests
12. Copying information from another student on graded assignments
13. Submission of work other than their own for written assignments

Any student dismissed because of Academic Misconduct will not be re-admitted.

The Director reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including dismissal, when any student fails to meet the standards of conduct appropriate for membership in the academic community. In the event a student is expelled from the course for any of the above disciplinary actions no refund will be issued. In the event any student/agency takes legal action against the Virginia School of Polygraph after being expelled and no indication by the court of wrongdoing on behalf of the school, the individual or organization will be responsible for all legal costs and damages involved in the school defending the dismissal of the student.

### **Re-Admission Policy**

Any student leaving class before graduation can be re-admitted within one year at the following fee structure: Re-admission will only be granted to students who are in good standing and have met and maintained school GPA standards.

Students who drop out within 4 weeks and then apply to return  
Re-Admission fee-----\$4,500.00

Students who drop out after 4 weeks and then apply to return  
Re-Admission fee-----\$3,500.00

### **Training Course Curriculum**

#### **SUBJECTS**

##### **Law and Human Rights (8 hours):**

The student will learn laws applicable to polygraph.

##### **APA Ethics, Standards of Practice and By-Laws (4 hours)**

The student will learn the relationships between the APA Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice and By-Laws and other ethical considerations for the practice of polygraph.

##### **Introduction to the History and Evolution of Psychophysiological Detection of Deception (8 hours):**

The student will be able to identify those persons who made notable contributions to the early and contemporary history of lie detection, and demonstrate their knowledge of the evolution of polygraph instrumentation, polygraph techniques, and test data analysis; the development of professional associations; and alternate methods of detection of deception.

##### **Scientific Testing (8 hours):**

The student will demonstrate a conceptual knowledge of sensitivity, specificity, false positive errors, false negative errors and statistical significance in the application of the concepts to diagnostic and screening tests; the ability to review research articles and explain their methodological strengths and weaknesses.

##### **Mechanics of Instrument Operation (16 hours):**

The student will be able to perform a proper functionality check of the type of instrument he or she will be using. During their laboratory exercises the student must also demonstrate the proper component placement, including primary and alternate locations in addition to the positioning of the examinee; proper software operations for the instrument he or she will use; acceptable data collection practices, and the use of standardized annotation on polygraph examinations.

##### **Polygraph Techniques (40 hours):**

The student will be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of at least one testing protocol shown to meet APA validation standards for each of the following applications: Evidentiary, investigative, and screening. Exposure to two or more validated protocols is recommended. Students will understand the essential components of these testing protocols, including the number of presentations, number of tests, and question sequence rules.

##### **Pre-Test Interview (32 hours):**

The student will be able to explain the rationale behind pretest procedures and demonstrate the ability to conduct a free narrative, structured or semi-structured interview.

##### **Post-Test Interview (8 hours):**

The student will be able to explain the rationale behind post-test procedures, identify basic interview approaches and demonstrate the process of post-test interviews for the various test outcomes.

**Psychology (20 hours):**

The student will be able to explain the basic elements of human psychology and their applicability to the science of polygraph testing.

**Physiology (20 hours):**

The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the cardiovascular, respiratory, central nervous, peripheral nervous, integumentary and skeletal-muscular systems, as well as pharmacology, as they relate to the polygraph data.

**Test Question Construction (32 hours):**

During classroom and laboratory exercises the student will demonstrate, in writing, an effective working knowledge of polygraph test questions for validated polygraph techniques.

**Test Data Analysis (40 hours):**

The student will demonstrate a working knowledge of the physiological response patterns used in interpretation of polygraph data, in addition to an ability to identify data suitable and not suitable for analysis. Students will learn to analyze polygraph data using a validated scoring system, including the appropriate use of decision rules.

**Countermeasures (8 hours):**

The student will be able to describe common types of countermeasure attempts and atypical physiology.

**Information and Results Reporting (2 hours)**

The student will demonstrate an understanding of necessary information content and presentation of test results.

**Practical Application of Polygraph/Mock Examinations (80 hours):**

The student will demonstrate basic proficiency in conducting examinations under field-like conditions. A minimum of three complete polygraph examinations, being monitored by a lab instructor or someone providing instructional assistance, will be conducted under field like conditions with a student to instructor ratio not to exceed three to one. No student will conduct an actual field polygraph examination until they have successfully graduated from the 400-hour education and training program.

**Education and Training Program Elective Instruction (74 hours):**

The student will be familiarized with other polygraph-related content or given additional instruction on topics listed earlier in these standards, at the discretion of the program.

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## VIRGINIA SCHOOL OF POLYGRAPH

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## CONTRACT OF ACCEPTANCE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand all of the rules and regulations  
Your name

contained in the Virginia School of Polygraph handbook. I further agree to abide by those rules and regulations that govern my conduct and behavior. I further understand and agree that violations of the rules and regulations of the Virginia School of Polygraph are grounds for expulsion. I understand that my acceptance of the rules and regulations contained in the handbook and read by me is part of the contract between Virginia School of Polygraph and myself. Should I violate any of the provisions in the handbook as stated, including the necessity of maintaining an 80% grade point average, it constitutes a breach of the contract and the stated repercussions will apply, up to and including dismissal and forfeiture of tuition paid.

I further agree that if legal actions are taken against the Virginia School of Polygraph and/or any instructor in defense of the school's rules and regulations, I agree to pay all legal fees the Virginia School of Polygraph bears in defending this agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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